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GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

SECURITY COUNCIL
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Letter dated 15 July 1992 From the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the concluding remarks made by His Eminence Archbishop Trevor Huddleston CR at the International Hearing on Political Violence in South Africa and the implementation of the National Peace Accord, co-sponsored by the Special Committee against Apartheid, held in London from 14 to 15 July 1992 (see annex).

I would appreciate it if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 37, and the Security Council.

(Signed) Ibrahim GAMBARI
Chairman of the Special
Committee against Apartheid

ANNEX

Concluding remarks made by Archbishop Trevor Huddleston CR on 15 July 1992 at the International Hearing on Political Violence in South Africa

Implementation of the National Peace Accord

This International Hearing on Political Violence in South Africa has taken place at a most decisive moment in history - we are at a turning-point in the efforts of the people of South Africa and the international community to transform South Africa from an apartheid State to a democratic and non-racial society.

The International Hearing was convened with three objectives:

(a) To receive evidence on political violence and the threat it poses to the democratic transformation of South Africa;

(b) To assess the initiatives which have been taken to stop the violence and to consider the contribution which the international community can make;

(c) To alert international public opinion to the issues at stake.

The International Hearing has clearly achieved these objectives. It has served as a unique opportunity for the international community to learn the truth about political violence from a diverse range of experts and witnesses from South Africa, as well as from written memoranda, reports and other documentation.

There is a common understanding that the root cause of the violence in South Africa is the system of apartheid and that it will only be the creation of a new united, non-racial and democratic South Africa that will ensure a climate in which peace can flourish and the culture of violence can be destroyed.

It is self-evident that political violence has now reached such levels that it seriously threatens the prospects for the democratic transformation of South Africa. It has led to the breakdown of the negotiating process taking place through the Convention for a Democratic South Africa and is of such a character that it would certainly prevent democratic elections taking place in many parts of South Africa.

The International Hearing provided an opportunity to identify the key issues which need to be addressed so that a climate can be created in which bona fide negotiations can take place as envisaged in the United Nations Declaration on South Africa. The most important of these issues are:

(a) The continued programme of covert operations being undertaken by the South African regime;

(b) The existence of special units, including foreign forces, such as Koevoet and Battalion 32, which are directly linked to the promotion and instigation of violence;

(c) The lack of confidence by the Black majority in the police and security forces which are perceived as an instrument of repression against those seeking democratic change;

(d) The failure to investigate thoroughly acts of political violence and to bring prosecutions against those involved, including the failure to provide protection of witnesses;

(e) The cover-up of cases in which members of the security forces are involved in instigating and fomenting political violence;

(f) The transformation of many single-sex hostels into bases from which attacks are carried out;

(g) The failure to introduce effective controls to ban the carrying of dangerous weapons and the refusal by the police to implement existing controls.

The primary responsibility for the political violence must rest with the South African regime, since it has failed to take effective measures to end it.

The National Peace Accord and the Goldstone Commission were envisaged as mechanisms by which these issues could be addressed, yet they have been effectively subverted by the South African regime. Indeed the South African regime has ignored many of the recommendations of the Goldstone Commission.

Evidence presented to the International Hearing confirmed that the objectives of the National Peace Accord have not been achieved and therefore special initiatives are now required, including the involvement of the international community, in order to achieve an end to political violence.

The United Nations, together with other appropriate intergovernmental bodies including the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the European Community, are already seized of this issue.

Decisive action is now required. There are three immediate and urgent challenges:

Firstly, the international community must intervene, through the establishment of appropriate mechanisms, to ensure not only the effective monitoring of political violence which would require wide investigative and other powers, but also the means to end the violence;

Secondly, the international community must apply the maximum possible pressure onto the South African regime so that it takes effective steps to stop the violence on the basis of the positions set out by the liberation movements, as well as the religious bodies, trade unions and other democratic organizations;

Thirdly, in order to prevent the South African regime from continuing to frustrate the process to establish a new democratic order, the international community must participate fully in the process, as provided for in the United Nations Declaration on South Africa.

There can be no prospect of bona fide negotiations taking place as envisaged in the United Nations Declaration on South Africa, unless the international community now takes such action.

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